



Supervisor Training

Dealing with Difficult Workplace Behaviors



How the Employee Assistance Program Works

Introduction

In today's world, individuals face a wide variety of concerns, including alcohol/drug use, stress, parenting issues, gambling problems, legal concerns, caring for elderly parents, and financial worries, just to name a few. When these problems become too great, they can interfere not only with an employee's quality of life, but also with job performance. As a supervisor, it is important to maintain a healthy, productive, and safe work environment. When personal problems become personnel problems, it is important to feel comfortable about directing employees to seek the assistance they need to restore productivity.

Components of the EAP

Your EAP is a tool for you as you work within your organization's structure to help you fulfill your basic responsibilities – coaching, motivating, monitoring, and evaluating your employees. The EAP is a resource to assist troubled employees and retain valuable people in whom you have invested a great deal of training and expertise. The following are core services provided by the EAP:

- Access to EAP professionals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Toll-free telephone numbers for employees/families and supervisors
- Experienced professionals – all EAP counselors hold, at a minimum, master's degrees, and are licensed and certified by appropriate state agencies
- In-person or telephonic appointments available
- Counselors provide assessment, short-term problem solving, and referrals
- No copayments or out-of-pocket expense for EAP services
- Confidentiality is maintained at all levels (employee, supervisor and company) in accordance with state and federal guidelines
- Unlimited telephonic consultation with a management consultant
- Critical Incident Response (CIR) services when a traumatic event occurs in the workplace

When to Make a Supervisory Referral

Below is a list of ways that problems can affect job performance. If you begin to suspect that an employee has performance problems, be sure to document them. We strongly suggest that you share your concerns with your manager, human resources or employee relations personnel before talking to the employee.

Absenteeism

- ✓ Unauthorized leave or excessive sick leave
- ✓ Monday or Friday (or day after a day off) absences
- ✓ Repeated absences of two to four days
- ✓ Excessive tardiness, especially after a day off
- ✓ Leaving work early
- ✓ Peculiar and improbable excuses

On-the-Job Absenteeism

- ✓ Frequent trips to water fountain or restroom
- ✓ Long coffee breaks
- ✓ Physical illness on the job
- ✓ Unable to locate employee at work site

Accidents

- ✓ Taking needless risks
- ✓ Disregard for safety of others
- ✓ Higher than average accident rate on the job
- ✓ Accidents off the job that cause time off work
- ✓ Frequent trips to the doctor/medical department

Work Patterns

- ✓ Alternating patterns of high and low productivity
- ✓ Alternating patterns of accuracy and non-accuracy
- ✓ Work appears to require greater effort
- ✓ Takes more time than usual to complete tasks
- ✓ Missed deadlines

Difficulty in Concentration

- ✓ Frequently seems to stare off into space
- ✓ Difficulty in recalling instructions, details, etc.
- ✓ Increased difficulty handling complex assignments
- ✓ Difficulty in recalling mistakes (blames others)

Generally Lowered Job Efficiency

- ✓ Increased waste/damaged products
- ✓ Lower production
- ✓ Mistakes due to inattention, poor judgment or carelessness
- ✓ Displays poor judgment
- ✓ Rigidly maintains current behavior, despite coaching to change
- ✓ Poor time management
- ✓ Complaints from coworkers, managers, customers, etc.
- ✓ Improbable excuses for poor performance

Poor Relationships with Others

- ✓ Overreaction to real or imagined criticism
- ✓ Avoiding or withdrawing from coworkers
- ✓ Arguments with coworkers
- ✓ Borrowing money from coworkers
- ✓ Unreasonable resentments

Changes in Mental/Emotional Condition

- ✓ Wide mood swings
- ✓ Outburst of crying
- ✓ Inappropriate anger
- ✓ Extreme anxiety
- ✓ Irritability

Changes in Physical Condition

- ✓ Slurred speech
- ✓ Poor balance or equilibrium
- ✓ Poor hygiene
- ✓ Excessive yawning/drowsiness
- ✓ Excessive talking/fidgeting

Types of Referrals to the EAP

Self Referral (70 - 80% of Referrals)

- The employee or family member calls the number on the brochure or wallet card (**1-800-280-3782**).
- An EAP customer care representative obtains routine information and assigns the most appropriate counselor.
- Self referrals emphasize the preventive, proactive nature of the EAP services.
- No one knows if an employee or family member used the services.

Informal Referral (10 - 15% of Referrals)

- Occurs when the program is offered to a productive employee who is obviously experiencing a personal problem.
- It is treated as a self referral, i.e., no reporting to company.
- The employee's work performance is within acceptable standards.
- A referral may be made by a coworker, manager or human resources professional.
- To make a "personal concern" referral, you may simply want to remind the employee about the EAP, give the employee a wallet card or brochure, and suggest the employee call the EAP at **1-800-280-3782**.
- The supervisor may want to explain how the program works, stressing that the program is voluntary and confidential.
- If you, as a manager/supervisor, are not sure of the language to use, or whether the employee's behavior warrants a referral, call the EAP before speaking with the employee to have a plan in place, and to know what language to use in making the referral.

Formal/Mandatory Supervisor Referral (5 - 10% of Referrals)

- A referral made by supervisor/manager when an employee shows a decline in job performance and does not respond to the usual supervisory coaching/input/feedback.
- This type of referral is used when the supervisor notices a pattern of repeated performance decline.
- The supervisor will probably want to consult with human resources or employee relations personnel and/or EAP before talking with the employee.
- At the time the recommendation is made, the supervisor has the employee sign a Release of Information form. Call BHO's manager/supervisor referral line at **702-243-8459** (fax: **702-242-5864**) for a copy of BHO's form, or you may use your company's form.
- The supervisor gives the employee a deadline by which they need to call the EAP. Give the employee the EAP phone number, **1-800-280-3782**.
- The supervisor should also call the EAP (in addition to having the employee call for appointment) to describe the performance problems and any disciplinary actions pending.
- The EAP counselor must obtain a signed Release of Information form at the first session before the member can access the link to the work site.
- The supervisor will know whether the employee is using the program. The information released is attendance and compliance (not diagnosis or specific content of sessions).
- The supervisor should emphasize that the final decision to use the program is the employee's choice, i.e., voluntary.
- The consequence for an employee's refusal to accept referral to EAP and to follow through with recommendations typically includes discipline up to and including termination.

How to Make a Supervisory Referral to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Keep this list in mind the next time you have to address employee performance issues.

1. Review your company's policy and documentation; consult with your human resources/employee relations representatives. The EAP's management consulting services are also available to discuss your concerns prior to speaking with the employee.
2. Meet privately with the employee and discuss the performance problem. "We value you as an employee and I am concerned about some changes I have seen. I have noticed that (state specific concerns)..."
3. Explain how the employee's behavior affects the workplace. "You are an important resource to other employees and our customers. When you (state the performance issue), it (state the specific impact on the workplace)..."
4. Listen to the employee's response. Do not spend more than 5 or 10 minutes listening. If the employee brings up any personal issues, use language such as "I am not a professional; however, I will be giving you a resource that may be helpful to you in resolving these issues."
5. Strongly recommend that the employee seek assistance from the EAP and any other company resources you have. "We have an EAP in place to help with issues such as these. I recommend that you give them a call. It is a free, confidential service."
6. Specify expectations and engage the employee in developing a performance improvement plan. "I would like to see (list specific improvements). What do you need to make this happen?"
7. Set a follow-up meeting. "I would like to meet next Thursday at 3:00 p.m. to see how things are going and if our plan is working."
8. Document the meeting and review company policy for next steps if performance does not improve. Continue to monitor the employee's performance, moving through the discipline stages, if necessary.

Where to Call to Notify BHO of a Supervisory Referral

1. Call BHO's manager/supervisor referral line at **1-800-559-9749**.
2. Please provide the following information to BHO: employee name, date of birth, behaviors of concern, and date by which the employee must contact EAP.
3. BHO will track the attendance and compliance of your employee until completion.

We're here to serve you, so please contact the EAP at any time for advice and assistance in:

- Identifying and approaching troubled employees
- Providing effective employee feedback
- Referring employees to the EAP
- Documenting problems
- Work/family life issues impacting the work force
- Exploring additional resources for employees with problems

Some Do's and Don'ts

DO make it clear that you are concerned with job performance and that's the bottom line

DO confront the behaviors as close to the occurrence as possible, in a private place

DO describe the poor performance in measurable terms, its effect on the work site, and the consequences for improving/not improving

DO make a referral to the EAP (either informal or formal)

DO let the employee know that the choice to change is his/hers

DO emphasize the confidentiality of the program, and that in no way will the employee's career path be affected by using the EAP

DO develop an action plan and be sure that the employee is clear about the performance changes necessary

DO monitor changes for at least 90 days to be sure employee is functioning well

DON'T try to diagnose personal problems

DON'T moralize or trivialize

DON'T take responsibility for solving the employee's problem

DON'T cover up for a friend

DON'T be thrown off course by the employee's emotional reaction

DON'T make threats about the outcome

DON'T interrupt the employee

DON'T discuss the employee's problems with the employee's peers

DON'T raise issues without documentation

DON'T become involved in side issues or "bargaining"

Online Options for Training

BHO also offers an online Supervisory and Employee Training Center which provides managers, supervisors, and employees with unlimited trainings, in a separate section of the website called *Elearning*. Courses have been designed to target very specific content so that most participants can complete a course within 30-40 minutes. Topics include Business Etiquette and Professionalism, Cultural Diversity, Effective Communication, Time Management and many others. As a supervisor, you may want to assign completion of one of these online courses to an employee who might be having difficulty in a particular area as part of an effort to coach and correct behaviors.

How to Access Online Training

Registration for sessions occurs through the web portal. To access online training and to obtain the monthly webinar schedule, please log on to bhoptions.com.

- Click on "Programs/Resources"
- Click on "Online Work-Life Resources"
- Enter your company code (if you do not know your company code, please call **1-800-280-3782**)
- Click on "ELearning"

In Conclusion

- A good rule of thumb for managers and supervisors is: if you are in doubt about which type of referral to use, begin with the lowest, least restrictive type. If you begin with an informal referral to the EAP, and the employee's performance continues to decline, you can always make a formal referral later.
- Use our [general EAP line](tel:1-800-280-3782) for self referrals and informal referrals at **1-800-280-3782**.
- Use our [manager/supervisor referral line](tel:702-243-8459) at **702-243-8459** for formal/mandatory referrals, as well as any consultation you may need regarding the referral itself.



We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in health programs and activities.

We provide free services to help you communicate with us. Such as, letters in other languages or large print. Or, you can ask for an interpreter. To ask for help, please call the toll-free phone number listed on your health plan ID card or plan documents.

Español (Spanish)

Tiene derecho a recibir ayuda e información en su idioma sin costo. Para solicitar un intérprete, llame al número de teléfono gratuito para miembros que se encuentra en su tarjeta de identificación del plan o los documentos de su plan.

Tagalog (Tagalog)

May karapatan kang makakuha ng tulong at impormasyon sa sinasalita mong wika nang libre. Upang humiling ng interpreter, tawagan ang toll-free na numero ng telepono para sa miyembro na nakalista sa iyong ID card sa planong pangkalusugan o sa mga dokumento ng plano.



BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE OPTIONS, INC.SM

©2018 Behavioral Healthcare Options, Inc.